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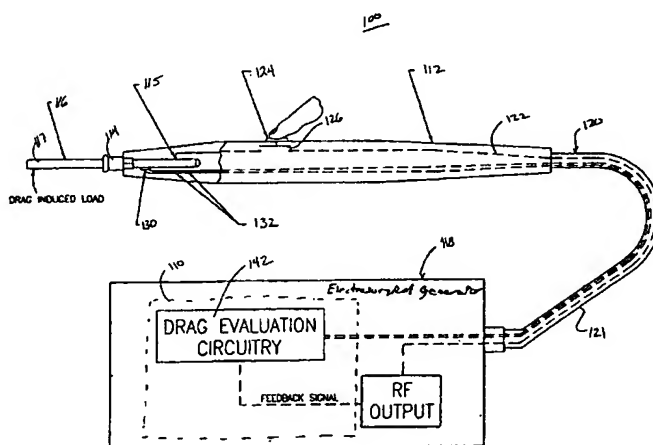
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(54) Title: ELECTROSURGICAL PENCIL WITH DRAG SENSING CAPABILITY



(57) **Abstract:** An electrosurgical pencil (100) configured and adapted to support an electrocautery blade (116). A strain gauge (130) is affixed to the proximal end of the electrocautery blade and measures the displacement of the blade as a result of resistance and drag acting on the blade. The electrosurgical pencil also includes a meter electrically connected to the strain gauge for monitoring either a change in voltage, a change in electrical current or a change in optical wavelength. The amount of blade displacement as measured by the strain gauge is available for display to the surgeon and/or as sensory input for a control circuit in the electrosurgical generator (118) that modulates the generator output waveform. The electrosurgical pencil further includes a control circuit electrically coupled between the electrocautery blade and the electrosurgical generator. The control circuit is configured and adapted to control power supplied to electrocautery blade based on the displacement measured by the strain gauge.

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